

Muskogee Cimeter.

W. H. TWINE, Editor.

MUSKOGEE, . . . IND. TER.

NOTES OF THE NEW STATE

The negroes of Ardmore celebrated Emancipation day.

A contract has been let to G. E. Zimmerman for a \$20,000 Christian church building at Chickasha.

Roy Huffman of Waurika was drowned while crossing Beaver creek during the recent high water.

Sheriff Oates of Woods county has purchased two mammoth bloodhounds, which he will use in hunting down criminals.

Twenty-three prisoners were sentenced at the recent term of the federal court at Durant.

The county commissioners of Woods county have approved the plans for a \$40,000 court house and will advertise for bids, the contract to be let at the end of thirty days.

An ordinance has been introduced at a recent council meeting at El Reno providing for a street railway franchise.

By a practically unanimous vote the Indian territory bar association has decided to immediately unite with the bar association of Oklahoma, the details of the amalgamation to be arranged by the executive committee.

A firm by the name of Houghton & Douglas are to erect a cotton gin in Guthrie to cost \$9,000. It is claimed that this will be the largest gin in Oklahoma.

Ardmore is to have a new park, situated near the Santa Fe depot. A company under the name of the Chickasaw Park association has been organized. The object of the newly formed concern is to promote base ball games and other entertainments.

Attorney General Simon has rendered an opinion holding that the assessors of Oklahoma county are empowered to fix the assessment on the street right of way in Oklahoma City. It was a mooted question whether this body or the board of railway assessors had the authority.

The new government jail in the Indian Territory will be completed about July 1st, and as a consequence something like fifty guards will lose their positions. Heretofore the prisoners have been confined in a stockade, upon which guards were mounted. Steel cages and iron bars will now supplant the eagle-eyed guards.

The Chickasaw medical examining board will meet in Ardmore July 4th and 5th. In order to practice in the Indian Territory physicians must be examined by the regular boards, which have exclusive authority to pass upon the qualifications of physicians.

Bloodhounds, which have been on the trail of the assassin of Dominick Brackin, the coal miner who was shot while sitting near an open window near Krebs, have been unable to locate any scent on account of the recent rains and the effort will be given up.

A train load of Oklahoma wheat of this year's crop, gathered principally from the wheat growing counties of Woods, Woodward, Kay, Garfield, Grant and Logan, is being collected by the Denver, Elid & Gulf Railway company for exhibition at the St. Louis exposition and throughout the eastern states.

OVER SIX HUNDRED PERISH

Excursion Steamer Carrying a Load of Sunday School Children Burns

UPPER DECK OF BOAT FALLS ON THROG

The Pleasure Boat, General Slocum, Takes Fire and Burns to Water Edge Near Brothers Island in Long Island Sound With Nearly 1,000 Women and Children Aboard--Many Helpless Children are Drowned in Effort to Escape

NEW YORK: One of the most appalling distresses in the history of New York, tragic in its immensity, dramatic in its episodes, and deeply pathetic in the tender age of most of its victims, took place in the East river, at the entrance of Long Island Sound, within a short distance of the New York shore and within sight of thousands of persons, the majority of whom were powerless to minimize the extent of the catastrophe. By the burning to the water's edge of the steamer General Slocum, a three deck excursion boat, more than 600 persons, the majority of whom were women and children, were burned to death or were drowned by jumping overboard or by being thrown into the whirlpools by the lurching of the vessel and the frantic rush of the panic stricken passengers. The boat was carrying a Sunday school excursion of the St. Marks Lutheran church on the annual picnic.

NEW YORK: Six hundred persons, men, women and children, perished by the burning of the excursion steamer, General Slocum, near Hell Gate, in the East river. The Slocum, with the annual Sunday school excursion of St. Mark's Lutheran church of this city, on board was proceeding up the river to one of the many resorts of Long Island. When near One Hundred and Twenty-fifth street persons on the boat saw smoke and flames spring from the upper part of the crowded steamer. A panic ensued on the boat almost immediately. Crowds on the forward deck began to spring overboard or to rush to the after part of the boat. The screams of the terrified passengers could be heard on shore, and hundreds of small boats immediately put off to their rescue. Owing to rocks on either side of the channel at this point it was impossible to reach the vessel. The captain remained at his post at the wheel and headed the vessel straight up the river for North Brother Island, where she was put aground in shallow water. Several hundred feet of open water still lay between the burning steamer and the shore, and many persons perished either in the water or on the burning vessel after she had been beached.

It was estimated that the steamer carried more than 2,000 persons. She was the largest excursion steamer in these waters and could accommodate 4,000 passengers.

The steamer whistle was blowing for assistance as she came up the river. Several hundred persons were seen to jump into the water just before she headed for the North Brothers Island. Her position in the water made it impossible for those aboard to reach land except by swimming. An eye witness says he saw fifty or 100 persons, mostly women and children jumped overboard. Most of the throng were on the hurricane deck when that portion of it collapsed. Many must have lost their lives in the seething torrent of flame and water. The pastor of the church, the Rev. George C. Ephoss, was on board with all his family and it is reported that they were lost. The boat caught fire in Hell Gate and the flames had complete control before any move

could be made to check the fire.

A frightful scene followed. It was impossible to run the boat ashore because of the Hell Gate rocks on either side. Nothing could be done in the way of launching, and as the flames advanced the passengers began to jump overboard. Hundreds were in the river. Many were rescued by the tugs and other vessels, but hundreds perished.

Several hundred bodies were washed ashore or towed or carried in boats to Brothers Island. Almost every other woman taken away was calling for her child. The disaster was witnessed by thousands of persons on shore, and as rapidly as possible hundreds of small boats and launches set off to render assistance. With the boat burning from under his feet the captain stuck to his post in the pilot house and the engineer remained at his post below until the boat was beached.

Even the passengers who did not jump overboard were not safe, for they were some distance from the shore, and the boat was a veritable furnace.

The greatest loss of life was caused by the collapsing of the heavy upper deck. It fell with a crash, crushing hundreds who had gathered on the lower deck. It was then the greatest panic ensued, amid the living stream of persons going over the railing into the water. Patients in the hospitals on the islands became almost insane from fright at the terrible scenes they were compelled to witness. A large part of the crowd on the steamer were little children, and there was little hope for them after they went overboard. The current was strong and the little ones were rushed to their deaths by the whirl pools in Hell Gate.

At least fifty children perished in this manner.

After the rail gave way and the passengers who had crowded against it were pushed into the river, mothers and children became separated and frantically sought each other, while in several cases fathers and mothers, gathering their children together, jumped with them into the water. Little children, holding each other by the hand, jumped together and were found afterwards clasped in

each other's arms. It is alleged that men fought with women to escape, resulting in the trampling under foot of scores of children.

The General Slocum had reached Sunny Meadows, at the extreme east of Randall's Island, when the fire was discovered. By the time the steamer reached One Hundred and Thirty-fifth street the excursionists were driven to the rail, many of them with clothing on fire, and they began to jump overboard by twos and threes. When One Hundred and Thirty-eighth street was reached the hurricane deck collapsed. Many persons were thrown into the water, but hundreds were precipitated into the lower deck, which itself was a mass of women and children.

Many of the bodies recovered were horribly burned. It will be hours before the fire in the hold of the vessel is out, and the bodies removed therefrom.

A tug of the New York Central saved nearly a score through the heroism of an unknown man. This man stood on the paddle wheel box of the Slocum and passed women and children to the tug until he was driven back by flames. He then jumped into the tug himself.

Neither policemen nor firemen, when this occurred waited to remove their coats, but jumped overboard and saved a great many who would otherwise have been drowned.

Both firemen and wreckers say the greatest loss of life, extending into the hundreds, occurred in the hold.

North Brother Island, where the Slocum was beached, is occupied by municipal charity hospitals, and a considerable number of physicians and nurses were immediately summoned.

Bodies Drifted Ashore

For hours the bodies of the burned and the drowned drifted ashore on the island, and between One Hundred and Thirty-first street and One Hundred and Thirty-eighth street in Manhattan. Some came ashore still alive. Many of these died, but others will recover.

The scene was pitiable in the extreme, as the living and dead were brought in. Rows of bodies were stretched along the beach. Hysterical women and frantic men went along looking at one after another, searching for children and friends. Women with disfigured faces, their clothing partially stripped from them, were carried to the improvised emergency hospital, crying for children who had been torn from them in the mad rush when the boat took fire.

Meanwhile the Slocum burned to the water's edge. At 12:25 o'clock, two hours and twenty-five minutes after the fire was discovered, she sank. It is estimated that there were nearly 100 charred bodies on her decks. Just after the steamer sank the water near by was black with bodies. The tug Fidelity succeeded in picking up eighty-eight charred corpses in Hunt's cave, off Ricker's Island and carried them into the sound. None of these bodies, it is thought, can ever be identified.

It is alleged that no attempt was made to get out the fire apparatus at the first cry of fire, though Captain Van Shank says that he immediately rang the bells for getting out the apparatus. According to several statements, no attempt was made to lower boats or life rafts.

North Brother Island, where the vessel was beached, contains a scarlet fever ward. The patients who witnessed the disaster were ordered indoors, and the doctors hastened to the rescue of those who had been washed ashore, but some scores of persons died while they were being attended to.

According to a statement issued by Coroner O'Gorman, 483 bodies have been recovered from the destroyed vessel, burned to death or drowned and found on the shores to which they had been washed or picked up in the river to which they had jumped or fallen from the burning vessel.

Tugs are arriving hourly with bodies from North Brother Island.